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the feebler word "shading," sentimentality taking the place of emotion. Disgusted with false-sentiment, "Preraphaelitism" threw the whole machinery of conventional, pictorial truths overboard. Thus it lost the control of "effect," the really emotional feature in a picture. But this was recovered again in a new shape in "Impressionism."

"Impressionism" had this in common with "Preraphaelitism"; a belief that by a close imitation of a scene in nature the artist could put the spectator of the picture through the very moods which he

had himself experienced in the presence of the scene. We now admit that an artist at work is affected by a thousand influences that are not present to his vision, and that deeply intuitive, less obviously naturalistic art, brings us nearest to the truth.

As I have said, in *Interior* subjects the *Nature* that has to be dealt with is partly human, and all the accessories have their intensely human value. But *Nature* in the other sense as well is there, with all her moods, and always will be, until the evening comes and the great day closes.



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FREDERIC P. VINTON

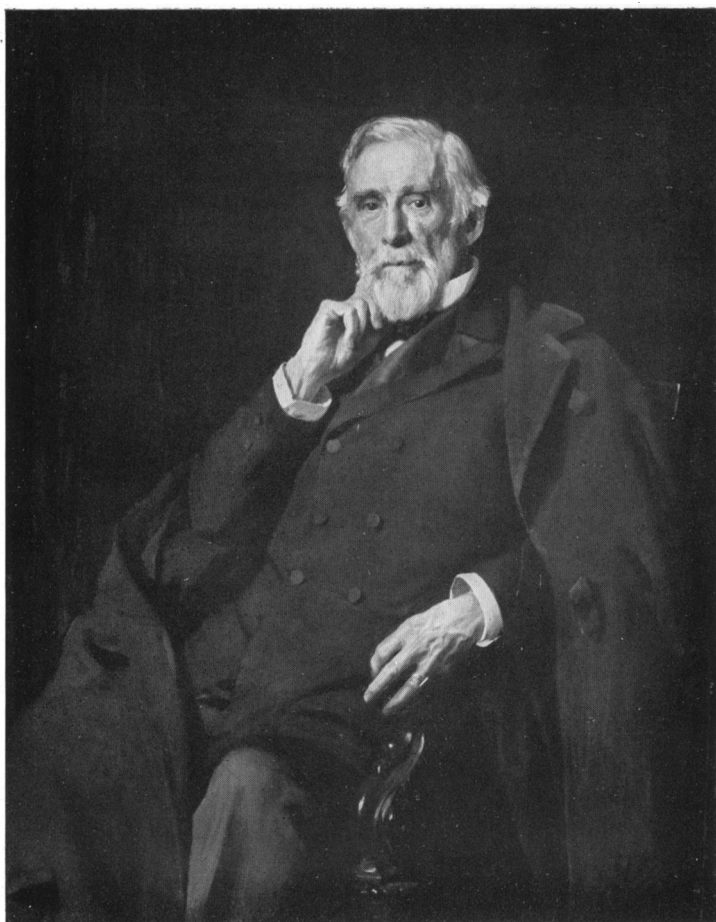
COURTESY OF THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON

THE VINTON MEMORIAL EXHIBITION

BY WILLIAM HOWE DOWNES

AT the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, a memorial exhibition of the works of Frederic Porter Vinton was held recently. One hundred and twenty-

four of his paintings formed the collection. About fifty of these were portraits, covering a period of work extending from 1878, the date of his return from his



EX-GOVERNOR BOUTWELL

FREDERIC P. VINTON

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European studies, to 1911, the year of his death. The exhibition was well arranged in the large glass-covered Court of Renaissance Casts, which made an admirable picture gallery, being used for such a purpose for the first time on this occasion. The walls were temporarily draped in burlap, and such of the casts as were too large to move were walled in by temporary partitions covered with the same stuff. It is a curious commentary on the endless experimentation in the lighting and coloring of the picture galleries in the new museum to find that this extemporized gallery, with its very lofty roof and plain walls, covered with a cheap material, made an ideally dignified

and perfectly lighted gallery, far better than any of the regular galleries on the second floor.

Vinton's sterling qualities as a portrait painter are well known. He was a strong, incisive, and thorough draughtsman, a serious and studious observer, with a deep respect for his art and for himself as an artist. On a solid and patiently laid foundation of technical training he built his scholarly, lucid and well-balanced style, in which is no straining for effect, and little sensuous charm, but, rather, a great deal of logic, sobriety, and substance. His grasp of character in his men sitters,—and he was almost exclusively a painter of men,—is, in the best



THOMAS GOLD APPLETON

FREDERIC P. VINTON

COURTESY OF THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON

of his portraits, such as that of Dr. Samuel A. Green, fully on a par with that of the greatest of portrait painters. He was fortunate in his sitters. The list of eminent Americans who were painted by him is long, and testifies to the high esteem in which his abilities were held for a third of a century. A large number of the men who sat to him were men who had "done things"—statesmen, jurists, philanthropists, authors, soldiers, and successful professional men, many of them actual leaders of thought and of action. Of the portraits in the memorial exhibition, I need mention only those of Charles Francis Adams, Wendell Phillips, William Warren, C. C. Lang-

dell, John C. Ropes, Archbishop Williams, Governor Boutwell, Commodore Perkins, Dr. William J. Tucker, Dr. J. Collins Warren, Carroll D. Wright, Dr. G. Stanley Hall, Judges Lord and Choate. And of course there are many more, such as those of Senator Hoar, Francis Parkman, General Charles G. Devens, and Bishop Lawrence, which were not in the exhibition.

Apart from the subjective element in the portraits of these men, which is the most interesting thing to the artist and the critic, there is, then, the personal interest which attaches to the likenesses of prominent and successful public men and familiar personages high in the favor of

the community. A collection of biographies of Vinton's sitters would make a formidable "Who's Who," and it is most probable that his association with so many men of mark stimulated him to his best endeavors and was something in the nature of a liberal education. In his character there was a good deal of the practical, downright good sense, judgment, and *savoir vivre*, which are a more important part of the equipment of the artist than is commonly realized. He was no chaser of rainbows, but believed in hard work, and spared no pains to make his work as perfect as was possible. His artistic creed was simple, and its central article was undeviating loyalty to the truth.

He was not an imaginative man, yet he was so intelligent that he was able to appreciate the value of the idealist, poet and prophet. He was not narrow. His taste in the arts was catholic, and embraced all the good things of all periods and schools. He adored Velasquez, and made a series of remarkably good copies after his works in the Prado, in 1882. He loved the Men of 1830. He was one of the first painters in America to proclaim the good that there was in French Impressionism. He warmly defended Bonnat once when I was denouncing one of his portraits. He owned several exquisite things by Boudin. He has often gone out of his way to call to my attention the work of half-fledged art students in which he saw or thought he saw promise. With a vein of almost startling bluntness, he had also many generous and fine impulses.

The most remarkable portraits in the exhibition are those of Dr. Samuel A. Green, the former mayor of Boston; Alanson W. Beard, former collector of the port of Boston; Elisha Atkins, Dr. Henry Wheatland, Causten Browne, Wendell Phillips, and Thomas Gold Appleton. Mr. Appleton was Vinton's first patron, and his portrait, which is now owned by the Museum of Fine Arts, may be said to have determined the painter's career. It was painted in 1878. Vinton's masters had been Bonnat, Duveneck, Dietz, Wagner, and Jean Paul

Laurens, an array of diverse talent sufficient to make a composite result of eclectic texture, but in this head of Mr. Appleton there is nothing to be seen or felt except a whole-hearted and robust naturalism, simple, direct, and convincing. He has painted few better heads. The portrait of Dr. Green, however, illustrates his highest measure of accomplishment, his period of greatest knowledge and skill, and his most complete and fluent style. This is a masterpiece. Everything in it is right. It all holds together. As a portrait nothing could be better. It would hold its own in any company.

Vinton's landscapes,—for he painted many landscapes, and there were some very fine things in this line in the exhibition,—were made chiefly for recreation, for play, and in the intervals of more arduous undertakings. They were not the less excellent, but all the more so, because of the conditions under which they were made. Based upon a silvery gray principle of coloring, they were delicate and sober, but free from dullness and heaviness. Certain examples reminded the observer of Boudin and Daubigny. The presence of some thirty or forty of these interesting landscapes in the exhibition served to give a desirable variety to the collection, which otherwise might have been somewhat monotonous.

An unusually well-edited and well-printed catalogue, containing a valuable monograph by Arlo Bates, and a number of half-tone illustrations, was issued in connection with the exhibition. The committee in charge of the exhibition was composed of Messrs. Arthur Fairbanks, director of the museum; Thomas Allen, and J. Templeman Coolidge, Jr.

Frederic Porter Vinton was born in Bangor, Me., in January, 1846. He had a common school education and passed the early years of his manhood in mercantile business in Boston. Thirty-five years of his life were devoted, however, entirely to art. He was a member of the National Academy of Design and of the Society of American Artists. His death occurred in May, 1911.